

The head of a specially selected

family has the duty of twisting off the head of the chief, and not until this is done is the chief officially dead. The head is buried for a year, then dug up and transferred to a box, which is also kept in the tomb. The head is questioned at times of stress (such as a drought) in the same way that questions are put to the corpse of a commoner. If the head swings forward, a sacrifice may be necessary to remove the drought. The house of a chief is not burnt at his death (but those of commoners are?); neither may it be repaired in any way, but the succeeding chief must live in it until the structure collapses. (1)

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Mourning for a chief lasts seven days, during which his children and wives wear strips of oxhide on their left wrists.

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Widows (of chiefs or commoners) must leave their hair loose and wear cloths which conceal them from head to toe. For three days a widow must sleep close to the corpse of her husband, with only a stick between them. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial relatives support the corpse and make it move towards her so that she may bid it farewell. She does not attend the funeral. At the end of a month of mourning she must lie for one night in the place where her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning an *ociabonda* guides her hand as she distributes the beer. (2)

(1) Hamby, (2) 1934, p. 272.

(2) Hamby, *op.cit.*, p. 269. Hamby states that mourning for a chief lasts only seven days, while from this information it appears that commoners are mourned for a whole month.

ECONOMIC LIFE

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I have seen an Ocimbundu male riding an ox without saddle. A cord was passed through the animal's nose to serve as reins. 492

The Portuguese name for horse is *cusalo*, a word which the Ovimbundu use in the form *okasala*, though there is an Umbundu word *ocingongocala*, which means "going with his neck up." The Umbundu words for donkey and mule are *ocimbulu* and *omula*, respectively. 192

Generally speaking, the ears of animals are not clipped, neither are cattle branded or otherwise marked to indicate ownership, but sometimes the ears of pigs and goats are cut to aid identification. When asked why the tips of the ears of dogs are mutilated an Ocimbundu will say that a dog with uncut ears does not hear when called (Plate LVI, Fig. 2). 231

Not many families own large herds of cattle among the Ovimbundu, and I did not see a big kraal until I was in southwest Angola. Cattle, which are a measure of wealth, are used for paying fines, making funeral feasts, paying debts, and securing wives. The cattle throughout Angola are well-developed, handsome animals (Plate LVII, Fig. 1). The bull remains with the herd the entire year; there is therefore no particular season for the birth of calves. Usually cows are not milked by the Ovimbundu, consequently these people have no milk, butter, or cheese. The Vakuanyama of the south milk their cows and churn butter in calabashes slung on a pole. 233 556 [171]

The Ovimbundu say that milking the cow makes the calf thin, but where the idea of milking the cow is borrowed from the Portuguese the Ovimbundu have a procedure which is as follows: The calf is allowed to suck for a few minutes in order to deceive the cow; then the milker begins his work. At intervals of a few minutes the calf is allowed to suck in order to continue the deception. 234 [177]

Cattle are killed at the funeral feasts of the rich, and the horns of the slaughtered animals are generally mounted on a pole in the vicinity of the grave (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2). [765]

The horns of the cow may be used for making water-pipes in which tobacco is smoked, or they may be employed as magical horns when filled with medicine. The hide is pegged out in the sunlight for one day after it has been scraped; it is then rolled and kept until required. When about to be used, the skin is soaked in water for one day. The hide is used to cover the tops of stools, to make pouches and to manufacture bags for carrying corn. In bygone days each king had a wooden box covered with hide, which contained his powder and metal when he went to war. The cow's tail is used 237 281

747 A common type of small figurine, some of which are female, others
532 asexual, is represented by an illustration (Plate XXI, Fig. 2). Such
little carvings are a normal part of the miscellaneous contents of a
divination basket described in chapter IX. These figures have been
obtained from Elende, Bailundu, and Caconda, all of which are
centers of Umbundu culture.

322 In addition to the figurines described, the collection contains
532 many more whose use may be conjectured. The interrogation of
756 Ovimbundu people indicates clearly that there are specific uses of
wooden figures which are consulted by the medicine-man. The fore-
going explanations illustrate the nature of the beliefs associated with
carved wooden figures, but it is not always possible to elicit a clear
account of the specific use of each one.

171 Consideration of this aspect of the wood-carver's art has an
532 important bearing on the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu. In
studying this question I have instituted comparisons between these
figures from the Ovimbundu of Angola and similar figures from the
Kasai area of the Congo region (chapter X). The publications of
the Musée Congo Belge provide illustrations for comparison with
the figures in Field Museum's collection.

The carving of animal forms (Plate XIX, Figs. 1-5) is no more
than a means of aesthetic expression resulting from accurate observa-
tions of animal life as recorded under "Nature Lore." Inquiry failed
to show that figures of animals are, or were at any time, used in rites
and ceremonies.

[643] The carrying of a carved stick is essential when a chief is visiting,
attending a council in his own village, or receiving visitors. The
ornamental paddle (Plate XX, Fig. 8) was owned by the chief of
the capital village (*ombala*) of the Vangangella, near Ngalangi.

● [765] At the death of a chief his staff of office, with his tobacco-pipe
and sleeping mat, are placed in a small house where such relics of
deceased chiefs are kept permanently (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). Plate
XX, Fig. 6, shows a staff of this kind which was preserved in a
sacred house in the capital village of Ngalangi, and on the same plate
are drawn short ornamental clubs which French ethnologists call
batons de promenade, an appropriate name because of their use as
part of the full dress equipment.

[276] The Ovimbundu have specialized in the carving of small objects,
for, in addition to clubs and staffs, tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes
are often elaborately carved (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

RELIGION

269

A mourning widow must leave her hair loose and undressed, and she has to wear a cloth which conceals her from crown to sole. For three days she is obliged to sleep close to the corpse of her husband with only a stick between them. The stick, which is about the length of the bed, is laid between the widow and the corpse. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial the widow says farewell to it. Relatives support the corpse and make it advance toward her, while she herself is held in the position of a bound corpse, and is supported by relatives who make her confront the dead body of her husband. The widow does not go to the funeral. 765

Mourning continues after the funeral, with fasting and periodical wailing at three o'clock in the afternoon, and again twelve hours later. At the end of a month of mourning the widow lies for one night in the place where the corpse of her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning a medicine-man guides the hand of the widow as she dips a ladle into the beer pot and distributes the beverage.

The widow may stay with her mother's brother or she may return to her parents, but she must not become the wife of another man until a year has elapsed. The second husband will make a present to the widow's parents or others who have taken her, but this gift will not be as valuable as if the groom were taking a virgin. 768 587

Tree burial I have not seen, but heard of it near Ngalangi, and it has recently taken place at Cileso. Tree burial is the method for disposing of the corpse of a person who has died in debt. Any one who gives interment to a corpse assumes responsibility for the debts; hence tree burial is the most convenient way of disposal. 766 672

An Ocimbundu from Bailundu said that in that district the child is taken from the womb of a woman who has died pregnant. Food is placed on the lips of the removed foetus so that it will not induce the death of other pregnant women. Near Ngalangi a pregnant woman would be buried with the point of a long stick on her abdomen, and after the grave had been filled a blow would be given to the top of the stick. 766

The foregoing are the principal points of importance in the funeral rites of commoners. Ceremonies connected with the death and burial of medicine-men, kings, chiefs, and hunters require separate consideration. [565]

766 of a dead king would in former times be taken at night by chiefs
643 and interred in one of the caves which are numerous in the rugged
hills of the Benguela Highlands. The burial posture for a king
is the same as that described for a medicine-man. The severed head
is eventually kept in a box, but primarily both head and body are
buried, though in separate places. At the end of a year the head
is dug up and transferred to its casket.

• 765 Mourning for a king lasts for seven days, during which his children
643 and wives wear strips of oxhide on their left wrists. The village
chiefs gather to choose a king from the "blood of kings," though
"sometimes a bad man will make himself king without waiting to
be chosen." The choice should be in favor of the oldest son of the
chief wife, "but if she has stupid sons, a son of another wife of
the king will be chosen."

769 Sometimes during drought chiefs and their wives go to the grave
643 of a chief where they say, "If you are angry tell us what you want.
If you want an ox we will kill one." If they visit the tomb of a king,
the king's corpse is asked, "Do you want a new box for your head?
We will make one." The oldest chief takes from the tomb the box
which contains the head. This is slung on a pole supported on the
shoulders of two boys. The head is then questioned in the way
described for the funeral of a commoner. The oldest chief offers a
sacrifice, if such procedure is demanded by a forward swing of the
pole which supports the casket containing the king's head.

768 The house is not burned after a death has occurred within, but it
643 is still customary to take down the surrounding fence and to build
a new one. The house in which death took place is then used as
before. I was informed at the capital of Ngalangi, and by the king
himself, that he must continue to use the house of former kings
until the structure collapses. No repair work may be done; con-
sequently the house was in a dilapidated condition. Some months
after receiving this account at Elende I was in Mexico, several
hundred miles away, and learned that at Cangamba the custom of
severing the head of a king by suspension and friction prevails in
the manner described above.

HUNTERS

224 While traveling in the district of Ganda, likewise in the Vasele
766 country in the hinterland of Novó Redondo, one cannot fail to
notice the presence of rock tombs (*ombilia* or *osonje*) which are
mausoleums of hunters. These are invariably placed in commanding

ADOLESCENCE

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The extent to which the order of the *vakuacisoko* exists at present or has existed among the Ovimbundu would be a very interesting subject of inquiry. It is certain that the institution does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families which belong to the order and pass on membership in it by heredity. Whether there are certain regions where it is or was in the past more strongly held to is not known. It seems to be or to have been more strongly entrenched among the cattle-rearing people to the south, but it is also said to have been practised in Lupolo (Libolo) and even in the region of Luanda.¹ Among the Ovimbundu it seems to have been stronger in the past than at present. Few if any practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance. All had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These mutual rights seem to have been extended to the extreme limit of having intercourse with each other's wives, nor did the injury or even the death of one brought about by another allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of *vakuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all expenses not already supplied by the family. Theirs was also the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others fearing defilement or responsibility for their debts. Bastos gives a tradition ascribing the origin of this institution to a wager laid between two chiefs.² It seems more probable, however, that it is connected with circumcision and tribal initiation. An analogous set of rights and duties is said to have existed among the Herero between 'coevals' circumcised at the same time.³

Tribal initiation for both boys (*oku lisevica evamba*) and girls (*uso wakāi*) is carried on in camps or 'schools' in the southern and south-eastern tribes of the Ovimbundu. These camps are regularly held in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo, and Cikuma. Even in those regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. It seems that there has been some passing on of the custom by heredity and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation rites.

¹ Bastos, 1900, op. cit., pp. 67-70.

² Vedder in Hahn et al., op. cit., p. 178.

³ Ibid., p. 69 f.

885 and stability of his personality (unu - lit. the quality of being a person) is only proved when he enters the state of adulthood at marriage.

DEATH

361 Each village has its own burial ground about a mile or so away. The
764 grave is usually dug by the children of the father's sister. (1) The corpse of a commoner is bound in a supine position and placed in a box before interment. It is usual during the funeral to find out the cause of death, i.e. whether it is the work of spirits or of some living enemy. Accusations of sorcery are frequently made. The corpse in its coffin, slung to a pole between two carriers, responds to questions as to who 'ate him' by forward (affirmative) or backward (negative) movements. (2) In the case described by Hambly, (3) the questions were put by the father's sister. The corpse may also cause its bearers to stop in front of a certain house during the procession through the village, thereby indicating that one of the occupants has caused its death. (4) Should the corpse not give a clear answer, the diviner might be called in to discover the cause of the death. Accusations of sorcery, as has been noted above, are often made within the circle of kin. (5)

Special cases

• 766 For children the same ceremony was carried out if they were old enough to walk and talk. Otherwise the diviner's services were called upon by the parents. At the death of twins, the mother has to shake a rattle or blow a horn instead of giving the usual greetings to passers-by, as she had to do also while the children were alive. (6)

766 At the death of diviners and medicine-men other members of the pro-
791 fession take charge of the ceremonies. The corpse is tied in a sitting posture and kept thus for three days before burial. No coffin is used. The questioning ceremony is carried out as for a commoner. After the interment the other medicine-men dance "because they have spirit in their heads", and during the dance each eats a living chicken that he carries in his hand. At the side of the grave a dog, a chicken and a goat are killed, and eaten by the mourners. The ociabanda's power is apparently thought to linger round the grave, which the chief or village-headman may visit to ask for rain and other favours. (7)

224 Hunters at death are buried in rock tombs (ombilis or osenje), which
766 are usually placed in commanding positions. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on top of the tomb. The bows of the deceased hunter are kept in his successor's "house of bows".

766 Chiefs, and possibly also village headmen, are buried in specially-
693 constructed enclosures in the villages over which they ruled. The tomb is a small hut with a substantial wooden door, which is surrounded by a strongly-built wooden fence, or it may be a cave. The wives of the chief are buried in the same enclosure. The head of a specially selected

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, p. 268.

(2) Childs, 1949, p. 57.

(4) Childs, loc.cit.

(6) Hambly, op.cit., p. 268.

(3) Op.cit., p. 266.

(5) Ibid.

(7) Ibid., p. 270.

HISTORICAL SOURCES

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The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p. 416): "A man cut open [262]
a large cocoon, extracted the contents, and smacked his lips with [171]
great gusto." My field notes mention the use of caterpillars as food. [175]

Capello and Ivens (1877-80) remark on the burial places of [766] ●
hunters which are distinguishable by the skulls of antelopes, buffalo,
and hippopotamuses, stuck on upright poles, mixed with skulls of
oxen killed in honor of the defunct. The writers noted that a heap of
stones protected the body. I photographed two types of cairn in the
regions of Ganda and Luimbale respectively. Capello and Ivens are
not precise in their locality, but I judge it to have been Long. 17° E.
and Lat. 13° S., a considerable distance from my own observations
(Plates XXXII, Fig. 1; LXXIV, Fig. 1).

I photographed the stilt-walkers at the final stages of the initiation [481]
ceremonies at Cangamba. These men had no costumes; on the
contrary they were almost naked but were covered with white clay. [292]
Capello and Ivens (p. 295), saw a stilt-walker with a feathered mask
and a netting costume. Such attire I saw on an Uluchazi medicine-
man, but not on the stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Figs. 1, 2).

I was unable to obtain information about the stilt-walkers, but [693]
Capello states that they castigated misdemeanants, punished shame-
less women, and accused criminals. Capello and Ivens were 187
miles to the northwest of my area of observation. The Uluchazi
medicine-man, who appeared with the stilt-walkers during my visits,
was said to make bad magic for women. The men ignored him but
women gathered round in a derisive way; they quickly scattered
when he pursued them.

Serpa Pinto, who made his journey across Angola in 1878, has [175]
so many references to customs and objects still extant, that I propose [114]
to tabulate his observations because of their value in showing the
preservation of indigenous traits in spite of Portuguese contacts.

The body of a chief is buried with a covering of oxhide. Many [175]
oxen are sacrificed at the death of a king. The heir to the deceased [766]
is bound to sacrifice his whole herd in order to regale his people and
give peace to the departed (S. Pinto, I, p. 63). The Ovimbundu
conform at the present time to similar methods of burial and sacrifice.

Near Huambo, Serpa Pinto saw in every village a kind of "temple [175]
for conversation." This is the *onjango*, that I have described and [345]
photographed (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). It is the house in which all
males foregather for the evening meal, which is brought by their
women (I, p. 96).

The gathering and eating of caterpillars is described. This con-[262]
tinues today (I, p. 120).

764 later in explaining the meaning of the articles which are contained
787 in the divination basket.

764 I interrogated my interpreter respecting funeral customs, and
(361) from these inquiries elicited the following information. Burial of
the corpse takes place a mile or more from the village in a grave
dug by the father's sister's children. The depth of the grave is about
six feet. Each village has its own burial ground. The woman who
questioned the corpse carried a sleeping mat which would be used
to spread on the bottom of the grave, though sometimes the mat is
placed outside the grave on the mound of earth. Midway between
Cuma and Caconda I photographed graves of the Ovimbundu
(Plate XLVII, Figs. 1, 2). The articles on the graves were the poles
used for carrying the coffin, a basket, broken gourds, and in one
instance the horns of a bullock which was killed at the funeral feast.
The horns were mounted at the top of an upright pole (Plate XLVI,
Fig. 2). Ngonga said that the belongings of a well-to-do person
would usually be broken and placed on the grave; the breaking is
necessary in order to prevent theft. I could find no trace of the
idea that property is broken so that its spirit will accompany the
man to a world of spirits.

The corpse was in a wooden box covered with a thin piece of
blue and white chequered cloth tightly wound about the coffin.
Ngonga explained that the body was prepared in the following
manner before it was placed in the coffin. The corpse was extended
in a supine position with the thumbs tied, the palms together, and
the hands on the pubes. The great toes were tied together and
the upper arms were bound to the torso with bands of bark or
cloth. The use of bark no doubt represents the older method.

764 At the funeral of a baby one of the grandmothers carries the
787 dead child to the grave on her back. The ceremony of questioning
the corpse is carried out if the child is old enough to walk and talk.
Ngonga said, "If the dead child was old enough to talk they think
he will say something." If the child was unable to talk, the parents,
accompanied by their brothers and sisters, would visit the medicine-
man to inquire the cause of death.

766 There are a few special observances connected with the burial
of twins. When the children were alive the mother had to shake
a rattle or to blow a small horn instead of giving the usual greetings
to a passer-by, and this she has to do at the funeral of one or both
of her twins.

RELIGION

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A mourning widow must leave her hair loose and undressed, and she has to wear a cloth which conceals her from crown to sole. For three days she is obliged to sleep close to the corpse of her husband with only a stick between them. The stick, which is about the length of the bed, is laid between the widow and the corpse. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial the widow says farewell to it. Relatives support the corpse and make it advance toward her, while she herself is held in the position of a bound corpse, and is supported by relatives who make her confront the dead body of her husband. The widow does not go to the funeral. 765

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The widow may stay with her mother's brother or she may return to her parents, but she must not become the wife of another man until a year has elapsed. The second husband will make a present to the widow's parents or others who have taken her, but this gift will not be as valuable as if the groom were taking a virgin. 768 587

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THE OVIMBUNDU

MEDICINE-MEN

756 When a medicine-man dies the people call in another medicine-
766 man to take charge of the ceremonies. The corpse is tied in a sitting posture, which is the attitude for burial. His charms are attached to his body and in this position they remain in the grave. The head ornament *osala*, which may be feathers, quills of the porcupine, or hair from a goat's beard, is placed upright on the head and fastened by a band under the chin (Plate XXIII, Fig. 2). The corpse is kept in a seated position lashed to a stool for three days. There is no coffin.

The corpse is carried in the posture described to the grave which is dug at a cross-path. The corpse of a medicine-man is questioned in the same manner as that employed in interrogating the corpse of a commoner. When the corpse is placed in its grave the medicine-men, some of them from a distance, dance because they have "spirit in their heads." The medicine-men shake their heads while dancing, and without pausing each eats a living chicken that he carries in his hand. At the side of the grave, a dog, a chicken, and a goat are killed. No part of the flesh is buried; it is consumed by those present at the funeral.

A sleeping mat is placed in the grave, and on the mound of earth are placed horns filled with medicine, and skins which used to hang from the waist of the medicine-man when he was performing. The rain-making charms are not buried in the grave, because their interment would cause the rainfall to diminish; the charms may, however, be placed on the outside of the grave. No food is placed in or on the grave. The mound of earth is painted with a human male figure. When a new medicine-man is making medicine or performing ceremonies he uses the name of a deceased medicine-man.

756 It is thought that the dead medicine-man has spirits which he is able to send to earth. No images of the medicine-man are made. Medicine-men visit the grave at night in order to take parts of the corpse to include in their medicine. At Caconda in western Angola I obtained the outfit of a medicine-man who included in his equipment two small hoe blades which he used for disinterring the dead. There was a portion of human tibia in the basket and a round stone pounder for pulverizing bone along with other ingredients.

[769] The funeral rites of a medicine-woman are the same as those of a medicine-man except that medicine-women carry the corpse. An *osoma* ("king") or a *osala* ("chief") will visit the grave of a medicine-man to ask for rain or other favors.

RELIGION

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KINGS AND CHIEFS

A chief (village headman) is buried in a specially constructed enclosure in the village over which he ruled (Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The mausoleum is a small hut with a substantial wooden door which is surrounded by a strongly built wooden fence ten feet high.

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I was taken inside a tomb in the capital of Ngalangi, where the king showed the interior of his burial place of kings. There were four mounds of earth, each of which covered the body of a king, and a little distance away were the graves of the principal wives. The hut contained pottery and gourds; also a small fire, which is replenished by an attendant who must not allow it to be extinguished.

Ngonga says that the burial chamber at Elende contains the head of the chief in a box. After one year from the time of burial the box containing the head is opened in order that a libation of beer may be poured over it. Sometimes the head is anointed with palm oil and a new band of cloth is added. These attentions are paid to the head in time of sickness and drought. If the head shows signs of desiccation an ox is killed in order to provide a new piece of skin in which the head is sewn. The tomb is visited by men who come to ask for good fortune when they are departing for a journey to the interior, and these supplicants are led to the tomb by the ruling chief. Near the burial place of the *sekulu* ("village headman") at Elende there was the house of bows (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1), which is typical of several seen in different parts of Angola. These repositories always contain staffs, bows, arrows, sleeping mats, and possibly other articles which belonged to the dead.

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The corpse of a king is suspended from the top of the burial hut by a rope which is tightly fastened round his neck. That the king has died is not admitted and the announcement states that "the king has a cold in his head." The head of a specially selected family twists the rope until the head is severed. The twisting is carried out gradually, a little each day, so that a week or more is required for severance. In former times the head was detached by twisting only, but at present a knife is used to hasten the friction of the rope. When the body of the king has fallen into the basket placed underneath to receive it, the people may say that the king is dead and mourning begins.

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Judging by the arrangement seen at the *ombala* of Ngalangi the bodies are buried in a hut constructed as a burial place for kings, but Ngonga states that the older method was cave burial. The body

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HUNTERS

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766 country in the hinterland of Novó Redondo, one cannot fail to notice the presence of rock tombs (*ombilia* or *ceonje*) which are mausoleums of hunters. These are invariably placed in commanding

RELIGION

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positions on domes of rock. The first tomb examined was in Ganda (Plate LXXIV, Fig. 1). This tomb is carefully built up from pieces of granite detached from the rocks which serve as a base. Horns of animals are placed on the cairn which is further decorated by a stick bearing the tail of an animal. Plate XXXII, Fig. 1, shows a tomb of similar structure in the country of the Vasele. From one such tomb it was possible to detach a slab so that the interior could be seen. There were two male skeletons; one lay supine while the bones of the other were in disorder.

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In a hunter's house of bows there are implements of deceased hunters, whose ceremonies centering in these relics have been described under the heading of hunting.

TRAINING OF MEDICINE-MEN

Training for the position of male or female magician (*ocimbanda*) is not carried out with formality ending in initiatory rites, neither is the position hereditary; but the boy or girl who wishes to become an *ocimbanda* must have "spirit in the head." This choice of children of peculiar neurotic temperament for the positions of medicine-men and medicine-women is widely distributed, as I have shown in some detail (*Origins of Education*, 1926, pp. 256-259).

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Among the Ovimbundu there does not appear to be an intensifying of natural psychoses by seclusion, starvation, or beating. When a boy is sick, the medicine-man says, "You have a spirit who wants you to be *ocimbanda*." The medicine-man kills a dog, a goat, and four chickens, then the boy has to accompany his master, carrying his apparatus and obeying him in every way. The medicine-man says, "Your father was an *ocimbanda* and the spirit wants you." The female *ocimbanda* is called *cambula* by other women, and her services are preferred to those of the male *ocimbanda* in cases of difficult childbirth.

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In Ngalangi I was informed that the Ovimbundu have great faith in the medicine-men of the Vangangella, a name vaguely applied by the Ovimbundu to several tribes of east-central Angola. An *Ocimbundu* will make a journey of several days in order to visit a distant medicine-man of another tribe.

FUNCTIONS OF MEDICINE-MEN

Magical practices are of two kinds, social and anti-social. The man who carries out divination, rain-making, healing the sick, and many other functions is *ocimbanda*, while the secret worker of evil, the witch or wizard, is *onganga*. In one village there may be several

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778 The charm *osonge* or *ombuiyu* is in the form of small neckbands, of plaited fiber to which two or three cowrie shells are fastened. It is worn by women who wish to induce conception. A neckband of this kind which was worn by the maternal grandmother is thought to be specially effective. Sometimes a small rattle, formed from seed pods attached to a stick, is tied to the neckband. The rattle is shaken when the mother of twins meets a friend to whom she is not allowed to give the ordinary greeting.

751 A tortoise shell containing fat and charcoal is worn by the mother of a child who is afflicted by the spirit of *Kandundu*, which may cause the baby to have skin eruptions or a very small amount of hair. In order to cure her child, the mother must eat small quantities of the contents of the shell from time to time. In some sympathetic way the medicinal benefits are transferred to the infant.

756 When dancing, the medicine-man usually wears a goat's beard attached to a circular piece of basketry. This *osala* is sometimes fastened on the top of his head. In place of the ax already mentioned he may flourish a small ceremonial hoe or whisk, or a wooden baton with a tuft of hair at the end.

[766] Among the varied duties of the medicine-man is that of washing the body of a king (*osoma*) or a chief (*sekulu*). To water in a pot, the medicine-man adds some of the blood of a freshly killed chicken. Then in a hut specially reserved for the purpose he performs the ceremonial ablution.

At Cangamba an Ocivokue performed a ceremony which was supposed to make a thief return to the village for trial. The medicine-man sat on his haunches, holding in one hand a small rattle and in the other a slender stick on which the decorated carapace of a tortoise was poised (Plate LXXXII, Fig. 1). Very earnestly the man talked, shook his head, and gazed at the tortoise shell which began to twist on its pivot. As the medicine-man muttered and shook his rattle, the movement of the shell grew faster. Presently the rotation of the tortoise shell was reversed, but so adroitly that I could not follow the movement or imitate it when allowed to try. The reversed movement of the carapace on its pivot represents the culprit turning back to his village.

CURING THE SICK

755 At Cangamba a female *ocimbenda* was seen painting marks of red and white on the face of a sick woman. The ceremony was called *ocimbenda* and its object was said to be the relief of rheumatism,

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HUNTER'S TOMB AND VILLAGE OF VASELE

Fig. 1. Tomb, near Lohobala. Fig. 2. Village, near Vila Nova da Salina

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